

Claims:

1. A method comprising:  
notifying an occupant of a vehicle of the occurrence of a detected sound  
outside of the vehicle.

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2. The method of claim 1, further comprising notifying the occupant of the  
vehicle that sound associated with an emergency vehicle has been detected.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the notifying the occupant includes  
broadcasting at least a portion of the sound associated with the emergency vehicle  
through at least a portion of a sound system in the vehicle.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein broadcasting at least a portion of the  
sound associated with the emergency vehicle includes broadcasting the sound  
through headphones.

5. The method of claim 2, further comprising disabling a sound system in the  
vehicle, so that the detected sound may be heard in the vehicle.

6. The method of claim 2, further comprising disabling a portable  
communication device in the vehicle.

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7. The method of claim 1, further comprising detecting sound associated with an emergency vehicle to provide the detected sound.

5 8. The method of claim 7, wherein detecting sound includes filtering sound outside the vehicle such that sound having a desired frequency range is heard in the vehicle.

10 9. The method of claim 8, wherein filtering sound includes processing the sound with a processing unit.

10 10. The method of claim 9, wherein processing the sound includes converting the sound to a digital representation.

5 11. The method of claim 1, wherein notifying the occupant includes broadcasting a prerecorded message.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein notifying the occupant includes enabling a warning indicator.

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13. A method comprising:

detecting the occurrence of a particular sound outside of a vehicle; and

informing an occupant of the vehicle of the occurrence of the particular sound.

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14. The method of claim 13, wherein detecting the occurrence of a particular sound includes:

capturing sound external to the vehicle with a microphone; and

determining if at least a portion of the sound external to the vehicle

comprises a predetermined characteristic.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein determining if at least a portion of the sound external to the vehicle comprises a predetermined characteristic includes filtering the sound external to the vehicle.

16. The method of claim 14, wherein determining if at least a portion of the sound external to the vehicle comprises a predetermined characteristic includes converting at least a portion of the sound external to the vehicle to a digital representation and determining if the digital representation includes the predetermined characteristic.

17. The method of claim 13, wherein informing an occupant of the vehicle of

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18. A system comprising:

a microphone to capture at least a portion of the sound external to a vehicle;

and

a processing unit to determine if sound captured by the microphone

5 comprises a predetermined characteristic.

19. The system of claim 18, further comprising a broadcast unit to broadcast  
at least a portion of the external sound in the vehicle.

10 20. The system of claim 18, wherein the processing unit is adapted to  
determine if the sound external to the vehicle includes sound associated with an  
emergency vehicle.